

*Simply
Better!*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Self-Assessment System

Quality and Results Dimension Workbook

Overview to the Self-Assessment System

Dimension Workbooks

- Customer Focus and Satisfaction
- Leadership
- Information and Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Human Resource Development
- Management of Process Quality
- **Quality and Results**

Guidebook for Conducting the Self-Assessment

These icons will help you to find your way through all Simply Better! products:



Resources



Answer-Score-
Brainstorm



Group
Exercise



Case Study



Helpful
Hints



Key terms
and Concepts



Useful Notes



World Class

Introduction

Quality and Results examines your organization's achievements based on service quality and operational results. It also examines the key measures used to determine contractors' performance.

By the time you have completed the dimension, you will have identified strengths and opportunities for improvement in these three sections:

A. Service Quality Results

How your organization measures service quality results and how its results compare to those of other organizations.

B. Outcome Results

How your organization measures operational results and how its results compare to those of other organizations.

C. Contractor Performance

How your organization measures contractors' performance and how their results compare to those of other similar providers.

The Self-Assessment System

Quality and Results



A world class organization's performance measurement system focuses on the quality of its services and its financial, productivity, and production results. Quality and results are guided by the interests of all stakeholders, including customers, staff, contractors, partners, elected officials, and the community.

The organization's strategy explicitly addresses all stakeholders' requirements in order to balance sometimes conflicting and changing expectations. The use of a balanced mix of performance indicators offers an effective means to communicate requirements, monitor actual performance, and generate support for improving results.

Benchmarking is an important aspect in the focus on results. This involves finding and modeling leading national and world organizations which perform similar functions.



Customer

The people, organizations, or groups receiving the products or services of your organization. In the S-A-S, customers are job-seekers and employers, the direct beneficiaries of local workforce development services.

Benchmarking

The continuous process of assessing, measuring, and comparing your services, functions, and practices to world class organizations, both inside and outside your field.

Customer Driven Quality

Consistently meeting and/or exceeding the ever-increasing needs and expectations of the customer.

Services

Work done for others. The completion of a process that provides an intangible product, which meets a particular customer need. Some workforce development services include job information and referral, training, and filling job orders.

Getting Started

Now that you are familiar with the continuous improvement concepts and terms for Quality and Results, you are ready to look at how your own organization handles these issues. There are five exercises to complete this dimension.

Answer the Questions

This exercise involves developing a shared understanding of how your organization works. When discussing and answering the questions, your team should develop a common understanding of what is done, who does it, how often, how well, the results achieved, and how well it is documented.

Score the Questions

This exercise is about determining a consensus team score for each section. Each question or sub-element of a question has equal weight. Please see the instructions on the next page.

Brainstorm Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you identify your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Brainstorming can occur after each question is scored or after the entire section has been scored. The purpose of brainstorming is to get ideas out quickly; discussion will come later during the next exercise. All ideas should be recorded using a flip chart or the blank spaces provided in the Brainstorming sections of the booklet.

Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you to make your many lists of strengths and opportunities much more manageable. It will be done after you have finished answering, scoring, and brainstorming for all sections in the dimension. Please see the instructions near the end of the booklet.

Plan for Action

This exercise will lead your team through several initial steps in the overall process for implementing continuous improvement changes. This step may be optional for your team at this stage, depending on what process your organization has chosen to develop a final action plan.

The Self-Assessment System

Quality and Results

Score the Questions

Follow these instructions to find your team score for where your organization stands on Quality and Results.

Step One

Individually or as a team decide where your organization falls along the thermometer. This is a continuum, so don't be afraid to locate yourself anywhere along the thermometer.

Step Two

Using a crayon or marker, fill in the thermometer up to the point on the scale which best matches your organization. Remember, this is a subjective judgment, so precision is impossible!



Step Three

For each section, mark the average score on the bottom scale. You may want to eyeball the average length of the lines to come up with a score, or you may want to compute the average. Again, because this is subjective, precise scoring is not necessary.



In this example, the score is about 55%, which is very good! Most organizations seriously involved in quality and continuous improvement can expect to fall in the 40% - 60% range. Even nationally recognized award winners rarely score above 75% across all categories.

Answer Score Brainstorm



Within each of the Sections - **A** through **C** - you will repeat the following three exercises:

- **Answer** the questions as a team.
- **Score** your organization.
- **Brainstorm** strengths and opportunities for improvement.

After you have covered all of the sections in the dimension, you will complete your work by doing the final two exercises:

- **Discuss and rank** your entire list of strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- **Plan** for action (optional at this stage).

You now have the background information and instructions you need to begin to answer, score and brainstorm the questions for Quality and Results. Before you continue, be sure that everyone on your team understands the general concepts and terms being used. Also, be sure that everyone has a clear understanding of the instructions and scoring system. Finally, check for consensus about the process that will be used. Remember, this is your process, so feel free to modify and improve it to suit the needs of your team and organization.

A. Service Quality Results

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with question 2



Answer these questions:

1. **What are our key measures of service quality and how are we doing?**
2. **Do we compare our service quality results with those of other organizations? If so, how are we doing?**



Q1. Service quality addresses current levels and trends in service quality using measures and/or indicators derived from requirements that matter to the customer. Some of these might be thoroughness, accuracy, timeliness, reliability, and behavior. If features have been properly selected, improvements in them should show a strong correlation with customer outcomes, customer retention, and improved funding opportunities. The correlation between quality and customer indicators is a critical management tool. Examples of indicators of quality service might be: follow-up contacts with employers, hours of counselor contact with customers, intake processing time, and multiple assessment options.

The Self-Assessment System

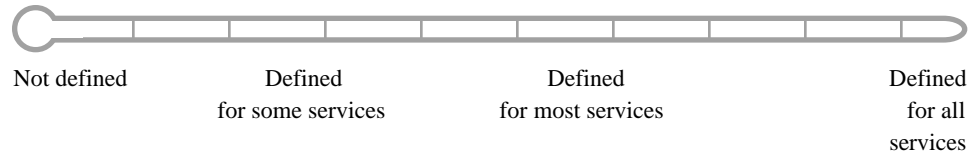
Quality and Results

Score Section A



1. What are our key measures of services quality and how are we doing?

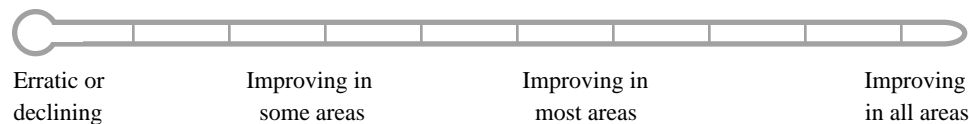
Our quality measures are:



Our service quality measures have shown:



Our quality service trends have been:

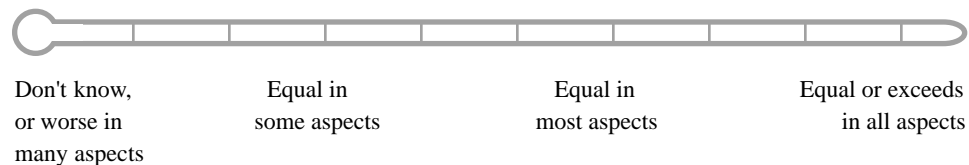


2. Do we compare our service quality results with those of other organizations? If so, how are we doing?

We compare our results against:



Our performance compared to others is:





Brainstorm Section A

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).
- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.
- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.
- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

B. Outcome Results

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with question 2

Answer these questions:

1. **What are the key measures of our overall performance, and how are we doing?**
2. **Do we compare our outcome results with those of other organizations? If so, how are we doing?**



Q1. Outcome Results addresses factors that best reflect the organization's overall performance. Generic factors of operational results might include financial measures such as return on investment, cost per person served, or fund utilization rates. Productivity measures indicating effective use of staff and assets, such as customers placed per counselor and job orders per job developer, should be considered. Human resource indicators could include absenteeism, turnover, and satisfaction. In addition to measuring the basic mission-related outcomes (e.g., attainment of self-sufficiency), workforce organizations could have a variety of results measures such as growth in the employer base, service expansion to new classes of customers, and growth in non-public funding.

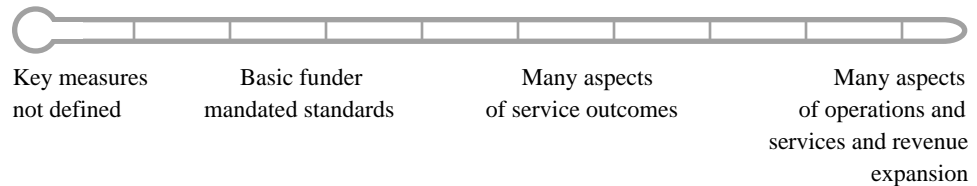




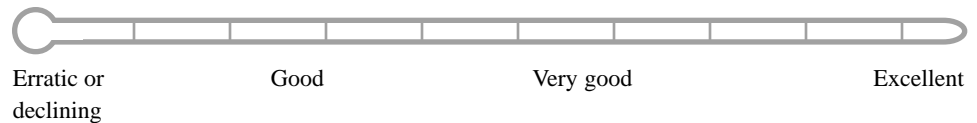
Score Section B

1. What are the key measures of our overall performance, and how are we doing?

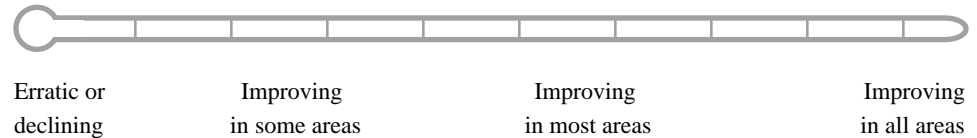
Our key measures of overall operational performance cover:



Our operational results have been:

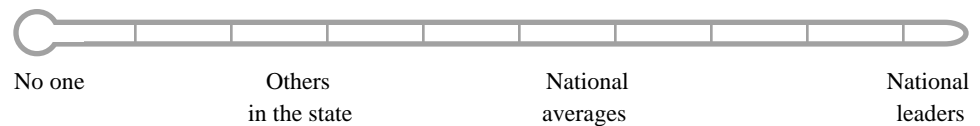


Our operational results trends have been:

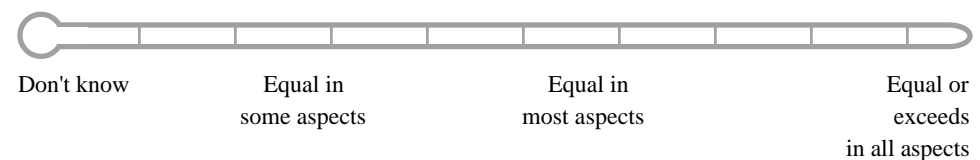


2. Do we compare our outcome results with those of other organizations? If so, how are we doing?

We compare our results against:



Our performance compared to those we have selected is:



Brainstorm Section B



- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).
- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.
- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.
- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

C. Contractor Performance Results

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with question 2



Answer these questions:

1. **What are the key measures of our contractors' performance and how are they doing?**
2. **Do we compare our contractors' performance with that of other organizations? If so, how are they doing?**



Q1. Contractors are external providers of service. The focus should be on the most critical requirements from the point of view of the contracting organization - the buyer of the services. Measures should relate to all key requirements: quality, customer satisfaction, delivery, and price.

The Self-Assessment System

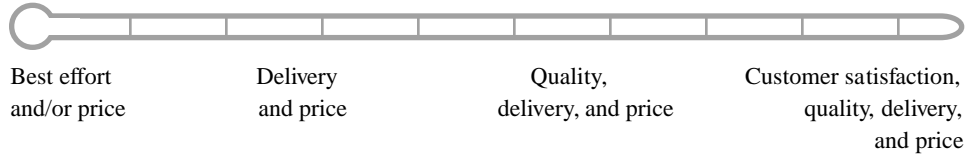
Quality and Results

Score Section C



1. What are the key measures of our contractors' performance and how are they doing?

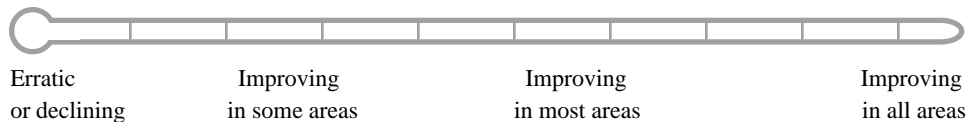
Our key measures relate to:



Our contractors' performance results are:

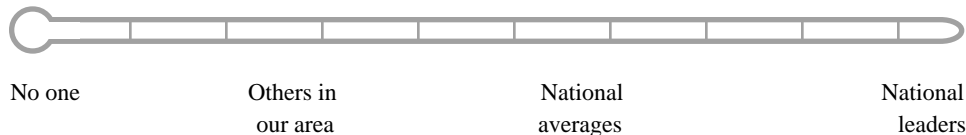


The trends of our contractors' results have been:

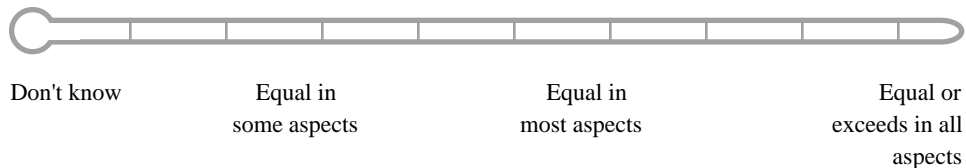


2. Do we compare our contractors' performance with that of other organizations? If so, how are they doing?

We compare our contractors' results against:



Their performance compared to those selected is:





Brainstorm Section C

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).
- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.
- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.
- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

Summary of Team Scores

Average the three scores to get an overall score for Quality and Results.

A. Service
Quality Results

B. Outcome
Results

C. Contractor
Performance

Overall
Score:

Remember, this is not a score of how good your organization is - it is a score reflecting how far you are on the road to continuous improvement. This is what the scores tell you:

0% - 10%

You have not or have barely begun to implement continuous improvement into your processes.

10% - 30%

You have begun to implement continuous improvement in a few of your processes.

30% - 60%

You have implemented continuous improvement in a wide range of your processes in many parts of your organization.

60% - 80%

You have implemented continuous improvement processes throughout virtually all of your organization.

80% and above

You have world-class, exceptionally sophisticated processes in all areas of your organization, and you continuously improve the processes themselves.



Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities

Now that you have answered and scored the questions and brainstormed strengths and opportunities for improvement, you need to make some sense of the large quantities of information you have. This exercise will help you to make this information much more manageable. Your flipcharts should be hung around the room where everyone can see them.

- **Group** the similar strengths and opportunities into categories to make the list more manageable. Depending on how many items you have, you may want to start out by brainstorming categories, by eliminating duplicate items, or by marking similar items with numbers or colored dots. Individual items may fall into more than one category. As with brainstorming, there should not be much discussion at this stage, just enough to develop the categories.

- **Choose** the order in which you want to discuss the strengths and opportunities listed. Some may not require much discussion. It can be helpful to set time limits for each item.

- **Discuss** the strengths and opportunities in depth. You do not need to solve problems now; you only need to be sure that you come to a common understanding of which are the most vital to be worked on or represent potential for taking action right away.

- **Rank** the opportunities in the order of importance for developing next steps and future actions.

Plan for Action



Many teams will be instructed by the coordinator to begin the process of planning for action. This process will lead your team through action planning steps and will result in an initial redesign of a service or process.

- **Select** a service or process to be improved. From the list of Opportunities for Improvement select one of the top vital few which were identified as a result of answering the questions. The relative scores for each question or section should provide a starting point for identifying where the largest gaps exist. The priorities for improvement in the organization should also be considered. Decision can be reached by multi-voting and coming to consensus.
- **Describe** the current process. Definition of the current situation began while answering the questions. Further research is now needed to identify the key features of the current process, describe the work flow, and identify current process measures.
- **Determine** the wants, needs, and expectations for the service or process. Determine who the 'customers' of the process are and what they want, need and expect. This step helps define the future desired state for the area under improvement.
- **Gather** data to determine the extent to which the current process meets the wants and expectations. Doing this step provides vital measurable information about the extent to which current reality meets the desired level of performance.
- **Redesign** the improved process to meet the wants, needs, and expectations. Define the design criteria and design the improved process. A measurement system should also be established, and requirements for implementation should be determined.

Take Action

After your team completes the five action planning steps for several of the top-ranked opportunities for improvement, it is time to stop. Your assessment work within this dimension is complete.

Congratulate yourselves for your hard work and accomplishments!

Your next steps are to get together with all the other dimension teams to share what everyone has found and to discuss and rank all the vital opportunities. Once your organization chooses the most important opportunities for taking action, you are ready to take the last two steps in the continuous process improvement model - implement the improvement and manage the process of change.

- **Implement** the improvement. Develop an implementation plan which specifies desired results, assigns responsibilities, and provides time frames. The plan should be approved, communicated, and monitored for results.
- **Manage** the process of change. Obtain customer feedback, monitor performance and impact, communicate the results, and fine tune the process by identifying new areas for improvement.